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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/766,926

01/30/2004

Naoki Sashida

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07/13/2006

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EXAMINER

VAUTROT, DENNIS L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2167

DATE MAILED: 07/13/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/766,926

Applicant(s)

SASHIDA ET AL.

Examiner

Dennis L. Vautrot

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 30 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/10/2004.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

1. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 10 March 2004 has been received and entered into the record. Since the IDS complies with the provisions of MPEP § 609, the references cited therein have been considered by the examiner. Because, however, only selected portions of the Japanese patent were translated into English, only the translated sections were considered. See attached forms PTO-1449.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1 – 3, 5, 7 – 8, 10 – 11, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Edlund et al.** (6,484,162) in view of **Stier et al.** (6,587,847).

4. Regarding claims 1, 11, and 13, **Edlund et al.** (hereinafter **Edlund**) teaches a database search system, method and program product for searching a database for data, comprising: a unit for receiving an input of a message describing know-how information corresponding to contents of the search processing from a user (See column 4, lines 46-49 “The form window accepts a user input for a query label and for a

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corresponding query description, both of which will be associated with the search query in the Query Repository.”), in a case where the input number measured at the end of the search processing exceeds a predetermined threshold value (See specification of the instant application, page 10, line 10 where the predetermined number for the threshold value may be 1, as it is in **Edlund**); and a unit for storing the input message in a know-how database under a condition that the input message is associated with all the search conditions input during an execution period of the search processing (See column 5, lines 1-6 “It should be understood that the label/description pairs stored in the Query Repository are associated with search queries that are also stored therein, and which can be retrieved once their associated label/description pair is identified and selected.”)

Edlund fails to teach a unit for measuring an input number of search conditions input during a period from a start to an end of search processing. However, **Stier et al.** (hereinafter **Stier**) teaches a unit for measuring an input number of search conditions input during a period from a start to an end of search processing (See column 12, lines 13-20 “The number of knowledge base queries for the domain would be the total number of knowledge base queries, which could be developed by query counter capability...of the knowledge monitoring system, which would have a query counter to store the number of queries saved between a beginning and end of the selected period of time.”)

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of **Edlund** with the query counter of **Stier** because knowing the number of queries allows the system to determine when there have been more than a set number of queries entered which could signal there was trouble finding the desired result. It is for this reason that one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include a unit for measuring an input number of search conditions input during a period from a start to an end of search processing.

5. Regarding claims 2 and 7, **Edlund** additionally teaches during execution of the search processing, the search conditions input by the user are compared with search conditions stored in the know-how database every time the search conditions are received (See column 4, lines 55-63 "When the Label Manager receives the user search query, the Label Manager stores the search query, the query label, and the query description in the Query Repository. The Label Manager also provides the query label and query description to the Query Search Engine then compares the received query label and description to the label/description pairs stored in the Query Repository to find similar stored search queries."), and in a case where a predetermined number of or more search conditions are matched with each other, the message associated with the search conditions stored in the know-how database is output to the user (See column 5, lines 7-9 "The Query Search Engine identifies the most similar stored queries according to a predetermined criteria of relevance.")

6. Regarding claims 3 and 8, **Edlund** additionally teaches when the user inputs the message on know-how, another or a plurality of users to be provided with the message is specified, and the message is output only to the another or plurality of users (See column 3, lines 61 – column 4, line 3 “The system may also associate search queries with a user identification (ID), to further facilitate communication of search information among users and sharing of search strategies...In the preferred embodiment, authorized users can retrieve search histories for multiple users of the system, not just their own search histories.” and column 8 lines 29-34 “With respect to the selection of a new user ID, the Query Interface can resolve issues of authorization and network security to control access to other user query histories, if desired.”)

7. Regarding claims 5 and 10, **Edlund** additionally teaches when the user inputs the message on know-how, the search condition which is associated with know-how is selectable by the user from a plurality of the search conditions (See column 4, lines 46-49 “The form window accepts a user input for a query label and for a corresponding query description, both of which will be associated with the search query in the Query Repository.” Here, the user selects which condition is associated with the query description, referred to in the claim as know-how.)

8. Claims 4 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Edlund et al.** (6,484,162) in view of **Stier et al.** (6,587,847) and further in view of **Birkhoelzer et al.** (US 2003/0140030). **Edlund et al.** (hereinafter **Edlund**) and **Stier et**

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al. (hereinafter **Stier**) teach a system substantially as claimed. **Edlund** and **Stier** fail to teach the message is voice data storing uttered contents of the user. However **Birkhoelzer et al.** teaches message is voice data storing uttered contents of the user (See page 2, paragraph [0036] "The user computer stores the voice data in a voice datafile that it communications to the reception computer.") It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Edlund** and **Stier** with the voice data storage of **Birkhoelzer et al.** because one of the goals of the invention is to make the entry easier for the user, and if the user is allowed to just speak the know-how information, then the step of actually typing it into the system is removed, and theoretically is made simpler to store the information. It is for this reason that one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include the message is voice data storing uttered contents of the user.

9. Claims 6, 12, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over **Edlund et al.** (6,484,162) in view of **Dettinger et al.** (US 2004/0167873). **Edlund et al.** (hereinafter **Edlund**) teaches a database search system for searching a database for data, comprising: a unit for receiving an input of a message describing know-how information corresponding to contents of the search processing from a user (See column 4, lines 46-49 "The form window accepts a user input for a query label and for a corresponding query description, both of which will be associated with the search query in the Query Repository."); and a unit for storing the input message in a know-how database under a condition that the input message is associated with all the search

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conditions input during an execution period of the search processing (See column 5, lines 1-6 "It should be understood that the label/description pairs stored in the Query Repository are associated with search queries that are also stored therein, and which can be retrieved once their associated label/description pair is identified and selected.")

Edlund fails to teach a unit for measuring a necessary time taken from a start to an end of search processing and receiving the input as mentioned above in a case where the necessary time measured at the end of the search processing exceeds a predetermined threshold value. However, **Dettinger et al.** teaches a unit for measuring a necessary time taken from a start to an end of search processing and receiving the input as mentioned above in a case where the necessary time measured at the end of the search processing exceeds a predetermined threshold value (See page 1, paragraph [0010] "...determining whether a query runtime threshold has been exceeded upon receiving each incremental input and prior to receiving a request to execute the query; and notifying the user if the query runtime threshold has been exceeded.")

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Edlund with the timing unit from **Dettinger et al.** because by keeping track of the time for the search queries, more efficient choices can be made as well as faster queries or know-how displayed when the timing threshold is reached. It is for this reason that one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to include a unit for measuring a necessary time taken from a start to an end

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of search processing and receiving the input as mentioned above in a case where the necessary time measured at the end of the search processing exceeds a predetermined threshold value.

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.


Korolev et al. (6,438,539) teaches the general concept of storing the search along with a search strategy.

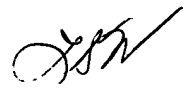
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dennis L. Vautrot whose telephone number is 571-272-2184. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8:30-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Cottingham can be reached on 571-272-7079. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Dv
06 July 2006


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7 July 2006